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SUBJECT: UN INVITES INTERNATIONAL OLYMPIC COMMITTEE AS
PERMANENT OBSERVER OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

¶1. On October 19, the UN General Assembly invited the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to participate as a Permanent Observer in the sessions and the work of the Assembly. The United States was one of over 100 co-sponsors of this initiative that had begun in 2008. Prince Albert II of Monaco, speaking for the International Olympic Committee as a member, accepted the invitation. Other IOC senior leadership in the Hall included its Vice President for International Relations Mario Pescante (Italy) and U.S. member of the IOC Anita Defrantz; U.S. Olympic Committee Chief of International Relations Robert Fasulo was also in attendance. Video of the Assembly's consideration of this and related issues regarding sport for peace and development is at http://webcast.un.org/ramgen/ondemand/ga/64/2_009/ga091019pm-orig.rm; also see UN press release at <http://un.org/news/press/docs/2009/ga13369.doc.htm>

¶2. Italy introduced a draft resolution, "Observer Status for the International Olympic Committee in the General Assembly" (A/C.6/64/L.5), in the Legal Committee (sixth) on October 15th, inviting the IOC to observe the sessions and the work of the assembly. Egypt, Argentina, China, Iran and Pakistan spoke after adopting the decision. They noted that observership was extended usually to a state or an intergovernmental organization, and therefore stipulated that the invitation to the IOC was an exception that should set no precedent. The Committee's report A/64/458 was adopted by the Plenary on October 19.

¶3. Secretariat document A/64/145 contained an explanatory memorandum qualifying the IOC for observer status by merits of its mission to place sport at the service of humanity.
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